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President Bush

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Proposals for a Free and Peaceful Europe

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The following is an address by President Bush at Rheingoldhalle, Mainz, Federal Republic of Germany, May 31, 1989.

Today I come to speak, not just of our mutual defense, but of our shared values. I come to speak, not just of the matters of the mind, but of the deeper aspirations of the heart.

Just this morning, Barbara and I were charmed with the experiences we had. I met with a group—a small group of German students, bright young men and women who studied in the United States. Their knowledge of our country and the world was impressive to say the least. But sadly, too many in the West, Americans and Europeans alike, seem to have forgotten the lessons of our common heritage and how the world we know came to be. And that should not be, and that cannot be. We must recall that the generation coming into its own in America and Western Europe is heir to gifts greater than those bestowed to any generation in history—peace, freedom, and prosperity.

NATO: Europe's Second Renaissance

This inheritance is possible because 40 years ago the nations of the West joined in that noble, common cause called NATO. And first, there was the vision, the concept of free peoples in North America and Europe working to protect their values. And second, there was the practical sharing of risks and burdens and a realistic recognition of Soviet expansionism. And finally, there was the determination to look beyond old animosities. The NATO alliance did nothing less than provide a way for Western Europe to heal centuries-old rivalries, to begin an era of reconciliation and restoration. It has been, in fact, a second renaissance of Europe.

As you know best, this is not just the 40th birthday of the alliance. It's also the 40th birthday of the Federal Republic—a republic born in hope, tempered by challenge. And at the height of the Berlin crisis in 1948, Ernst Reuter called on Germans to stand firm and confident, and you did—courageously, magnificently.

And the historic genius of the German people has flourished in this age of peace. And your nation has become a leader in technology and the fourth largest economy on earth. But more important, you have inspired the world by forcefully promoting the principles of human rights, democracy, and freedom. The United States and the Federal Republic have always been firm friends and allies. But today we share an added role—partners in leadership.

Of course, leadership has a constant companion—responsibility. And our responsibility is to look ahead and grasp the promise of the future. I said recently that we're at the end of one era, and at the beginning of another. And I noted that in regard to the Soviet Union, our policy is to move beyond containment. For 40 years, the seeds of democracy in Eastern Europe lay dormant, buried under the frozen tundra of the Cold War. And for 40 years, the world has waited for the Cold War to end. And decade after decade, time after time, the flowering human spirit withered from the chill of conflict and oppression. And again, the world waited. But the passion for freedom cannot be denied forever. The world has waited long enough. The time is right. Let Europe be whole and free.

To the founders of the alliance, this aspiration was a distant dream, and now it's the new mission of NATO. If ancient rivals like Britain and France, or France and Germany, can reconcile, then why not the nations of the East and West?

Growing Political Freedoms in the East

In the East, brave men and women are showing us the way. Look at Poland, where Solidarity—*Solidarnosc* and the Catholic Church have won legal status. The forces of freedom are putting the Soviet status quo on the defensive.

In the West, we have succeeded because we've been faithful to our values and our vision. And the other side of the rusting Iron Curtain, their vision failed.

The Cold War began with the division of Europe. It can only end when Europe is whole. Today, it is this very concept of a divided Europe that is un-

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der siege. And that's why our hopes run especially high, because the division of Europe is under siege not by armies, but by the spread of ideas that began here, right here. It was a son of Mainz, Johannes Gutenberg, who liberated the mind of man through the power of the printed word.

And that same liberating power is unleashed today in a hundred new forms. The Voice of America, *Deutsche Welle* allow us to enlighten millions deep within Eastern Europe and throughout the world. Television satellites allow us to bear witness from the shipyards of Gdansk [Poland] to Tiananmen Square [Beijing, China]. But the momentum for freedom does not just come from the printed word or the transistor or the television screen. It comes from a single powerful idea—democracy.

This one idea is sweeping across Eurasia. This one idea is why the communist world, from Budapest to Beijing, is in ferment. Of course, for the leaders of the East, it's not just freedom for freedom's sake. But whatever their motivation, they are unleashing a force they will find difficult to channel or control—the hunger for liberty of oppressed peoples who have tasted freedom.

Nowhere is this more apparent than in Eastern Europe, the birthplace of the Cold War. In Poland, at the end of World War II, the Soviet Army prevented the free elections promised by Stalin at Yalta. Today, Poles are taking the first steps toward real elections, so long promised—so long deferred. And in Hungary, at last, we see a chance for multiparty competition at the ballot box.

As President, I will continue to do all I can to help open the closed societies of the East. We seek self-determination for all of Germany and all of Eastern Europe. And we will not relax, and we must not waiver. Again, the world has waited long enough.

But democracy's journey East is not easy. Intellectuals like the great Czech playwright Vaclav Havel still work under the shadow of coercion. And repression still menaces too many peoples of Eastern Europe. Barriers and barbed wire still fence in nations. So when I visit Poland and Hungary this summer, I will deliver this message: There cannot be a common European home until all within it are free to move from room to room. And I'll take another message: The path of freedom leads to a larger home—a home where West meets East, a democratic home—the commonwealth of free nations.

And I said that positive steps by the Soviets would be met by steps of our own. This is why I announced on May 12th a readiness to consider granting to the Soviets a temporary waiver of the Jackson-Vanik trade restrictions, if they liberalize emigration. This is also why I announced, on Monday, that the United States is prepared to drop the "no exceptions" standard that has guided our approach to controlling the export of technology to the Soviet Union—lifting a sanction enacted in response to their invasion of Afghanistan.

Proposals for a Whole and Free Europe

In this same spirit, I set forth four proposals to heal Europe's tragic division, to help Europe become whole and free.

First. I propose we strengthen and broaden the Helsinki process to promote free elections and political pluralism in Eastern Europe. As the forces of freedom and democracy rise in the East, so should our expectations.

And weaving together the slender threads of freedom in the East will require much from the Western democracies. In particular, the great political parties of the West must assume a historic responsibility—to lend counsel and support to those brave men and women who are trying to form the first truly representative political parties in the East, to advance freedom and democracy, to part the Iron Curtain.

In fact, it's already begun to part. The frontier of barbed wire and minefields between Hungary and Austria is being removed, foot by foot, mile by mile. Just as the barriers are coming down in Hungary, so must they fall throughout all of Eastern Europe. Let Berlin be next.

Second. Nowhere is the division between East and West seen more clearly than in Berlin. And there this brutal wall cuts neighbor from neighbor, brother from brother. And that wall stands as a monument to the failure of communism. It must come down.

Now, *glasnost* may be a Russian word, but openness is a Western concept. West Berlin has always enjoyed the openness of a free city. And our proposal would make all Berlin a center of commerce between East and West—a place of cooperation, not a point of confrontation. And we rededicate ourselves to the 1987 allied initiative to strengthen freedom and security in that divided city. This, then is my second proposal—bring *glasnost* to East Berlin.

Third. My generation remembers a Europe ravaged by war. And, of course, Europe has long since rebuilt its proud cities and restored its majestic cathedrals. But what a tragedy it would be if your continent was again spoiled, this time by a more subtle and insidious danger—the Chancellor [Helmut Kohl] referred to it—that of poisoned rivers and acid rain.

America has faced an environmental tragedy in Alaska. Countries from France to Finland suffered after Chernobyl. West Germany is struggling to save the Black Forest today. And throughout, we have all learned a terrible lesson—environmental destruction respects no borders. So my third proposal is to work together on these environmental problems, with the United States and Western Europe extending a hand to the East. Since much remains to be done in both East and West, we ask Eastern Europe to join us in this common struggle. We can offer technical training, assistance in drafting laws and regulations, and new technologies for tackling these awesome problems. And I invite the environmentalists and engineers of the East to visit the West, to share knowledge so we can succeed in this great cause.

Fourth. My fourth proposal—actually, a set of proposals—concerns a less militarized Europe, the most heavily armed continent in the world. Nowhere is this more important than in the two Germanys. And that's why our quest to safely reduce armaments has a special significance for the German people.

To those who are impatient with our measured pace in arms reductions, I respectfully suggest that history teaches us a lesson—that unity and strength are the catalyst and prerequisite to arms control. We've always believed that a strong Western defense is the best road to peace. Forty years of experience have proven us right.

But we've done more than just keep the peace. By standing together, we have convinced the Soviets that their arms buildup has been costly and pointless. Let us not give them incentives to return to the policies of the past. Let us give them every reason to abandon the arms race for the sake of the human race.

In this era of both negotiation and armed camps, America understands that West Germany bears a special burden. Of course, in this nuclear age, every nation is on the front line. But not all free nations are called to endure the tension of regular military activity, or the constant presence of foreign military forces. We are sensitive to these special conditions that this needed presence imposes.

To significantly ease the burden of armed camps in Europe, we must be aggressive in our pursuit of solid, verifiable agreements between NATO and the Warsaw Pact. On Monday, with my NATO colleagues in Brussels, I shared my great hope for the future of conventional arms negotiations in Europe. I shared with them a proposal for achieving significant reductions in the near future.

And as you know, the Warsaw Pact has now accepted major elements of our Western approach to the new conventional arms negotiations in Vienna. The Eastern bloc acknowledges that a substantial imbalance exists between the conventional forces of the two alliances. And they've moved closer to NATO's position by accepting most elements of our initial conventional arms proposal. These encouraging steps have produced the opportunity for creative and decisive action, and we shall not let that opportunity pass.

Our proposal has several key initiatives. I propose that we "lock in" the Eastern agreement to Western-proposed ceilings on tanks and armored troop carriers. We should also seek an agreement on a common numerical ceiling for artillery in the range between NATO's and that of the Warsaw Pact, provided these definitional problems can be solved. And the weapons we remove must be destroyed.

We should expand our current offer to include all land-based combat aircraft and helicopters, by proposing that both sides reduce in these categories to a level 15% below the current NATO totals. Given the Warsaw Pact's advantage in numbers, the pact would have to make far deeper reductions than NATO to establish parity at those lower levels. Again, the weapons we remove must be destroyed.

I propose a 20% cut in combat manpower in U.S.-stationed forces, and a resulting ceiling on U.S. and Soviet ground and air forces stationed outside national territory in the Atlantic-to-the-Urals zone, at approximately 275,000 each. This reduction to parity, a fair and balanced level of strength, would compel the Soviets to reduce their 600,000-strong Red Army in Eastern Europe by 325,000. And these withdrawn forces must be demobilized.

And finally, I call on President Gorbachev to accelerate the timetable for reaching these agreements. There is no reason why the 5–6 year timetable as suggested by Moscow is necessary. I propose a much more ambitious schedule. And we should aim to reach an agreement within 6 months to 1 year, and accomplish reductions by 1992 or 1993 at the latest.

In addition to my conventional arms proposals, I believe that we ought to strive to improve the openness with which we and the Soviets conduct our military activities. And therefore, I want to reiterate my support for greater transparency. I renew my proposal that the Soviet Union and its allies open their skies to reciprocal, unarmed aerial surveillance flights, conducted on short notice, to watch military activities. Satellites are a very important way to verify arms control agreements. But they do not provide constant coverage of the Soviet Union. An "open skies" policy would move both sides closer to a total continuity of coverage, while symbolizing greater openness between East and West.

These are my proposals to achieve a less militarized Europe. A short time ago, they would have been too revolutionary to consider. And yet today, we may well be on the verge of a more ambitious agreement in Europe than anyone considered possible.

But we are also challenged by developments outside NATO's traditional areas of concern. Every Western nation still faces the global proliferation of lethal technologies, including ballistic missiles and chemical weapons. We must collectively control the spread of these growing threats. So we should begin as soon as possible with a worldwide ban on chemical weapons.

Conclusion

Growing political freedom in the East, a Berlin without barriers, a cleaner environment, a less militarized Europe—each is a noble goal, and taken together they are the foundation of our larger vision—a Europe that is free and at peace with itself. And so let the Soviets know that our goal is not to undermine their legitimate security interests. Our goal is to convince them, step by step, that their definition of security is obsolete, that their deepest fears are unfounded.

When Western Europe takes its giant step in 1992, it will institutionalize what's been true for years—borders open to people, commerce, and ideas. No shadow of suspicion, no sinister fear is cast between you. The very prospect of war within the West is unthinkable to our citizens. But such a peaceful integration of nations into a world community does not mean that any nation must relinquish its culture much less its sovereignty.

This process of integration, a subtle weaving of shared interests, which is so nearly complete in Western Europe, has now finally begun in the East. We want to help the nations of Eastern Europe realize what we, the nations of Western Europe, learned long ago. The foundation of lasting security comes, not from tanks, troops, or barbed wire. It is built on shared values and agreements that link free peoples.

The nations of Eastern Europe are rediscovering the glories of their national heritage. So let the colors and hues of national culture return to these gray societies of the East. Let Europe forego a peace of tension for a peace of trust, one in which the peoples of the East and West can rejoice; a continent that is diverse, yet whole.

Forty years of Cold War have tested Western resolve and the strength of our values. NATO's first mission is now nearly complete. But if we are to fulfill our vision—our European vision—the challenges of the next 40 years will ask no less of us. Together, we shall answer the call. The world has waited long enough.

Thank you for inviting me to Mainz. May God bless you all. Long live the friendship between Germany and the United States. ■

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